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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3041  
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH IMMEDIATE 0319  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHNO/USDELMC BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHBS/USNMR BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 000236

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/04/2019

TAGS: [NATO PREL SA](#)

SUBJECT: RFG: USG POSITION ON POTENTIAL MEMBERSHIP OF SAUDI ARABIA IN THE ICI

Classified By: DCM John Heffern for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) This message contains a request for guidance. Please see paragraph 4.

12. (C) In a bilateral meeting between NATO Secretary General (SYG) Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia, the Ambassador informed the SYG that a recent high-level Saudi delegation which visited NATO in April recommended that Riyadh join the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). According to the NATO International Staff, any such recommendation must still be approved by a higher level within the Government of Saudi Arabia, and approval at that stage could take a long time.

13. (C) The SYG asked Ambassador Daalder whether Washington supported eventual Saudi membership in ICI.

14. (C) RFG: Please confirm whether Washington still supports Saudi membership in the ICI and the priority Washington places on this development no later than Monday, June 8.

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Background  
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15. (C) In paragraph 37 of the Istanbul Communique, Heads of State and Government agreed to invite into the ICI "... interested countries in the region, starting with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council...." As Saudi Arabia is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Saudi Arabia has already been invited by NATO to join the partnership. Riyadh, however, has only chosen to take "observer" status in ICI.

DAALDER